

PCCLUB.ORG.UK

Wednesday, 2nd July 2005

Stuart Crump

WebCams (Web Cameras)

Tutorial 3

# Overview

- What is a WebCam
  - Hardware
  - Software
- Why would you use one
  - Communicating
  - Security
  - Taking photos
- Buying
  - Specification
  - Cost

# What is a WebCam

## ■ Hardware

- Small fixed desktop camera.
- Connects via USB, LAN, Parallel\*, Firewire\*\*
- Manual Focus
- Max. 640x480 resolution.
- B&W and Colour (16m)



# What is a WebCam

## ■ Software

- Driver (for Windows & Linux)
- Viewer
- Recorder
- Other..
  - Colour tweak
  - Help



# Security

## ■ Why?

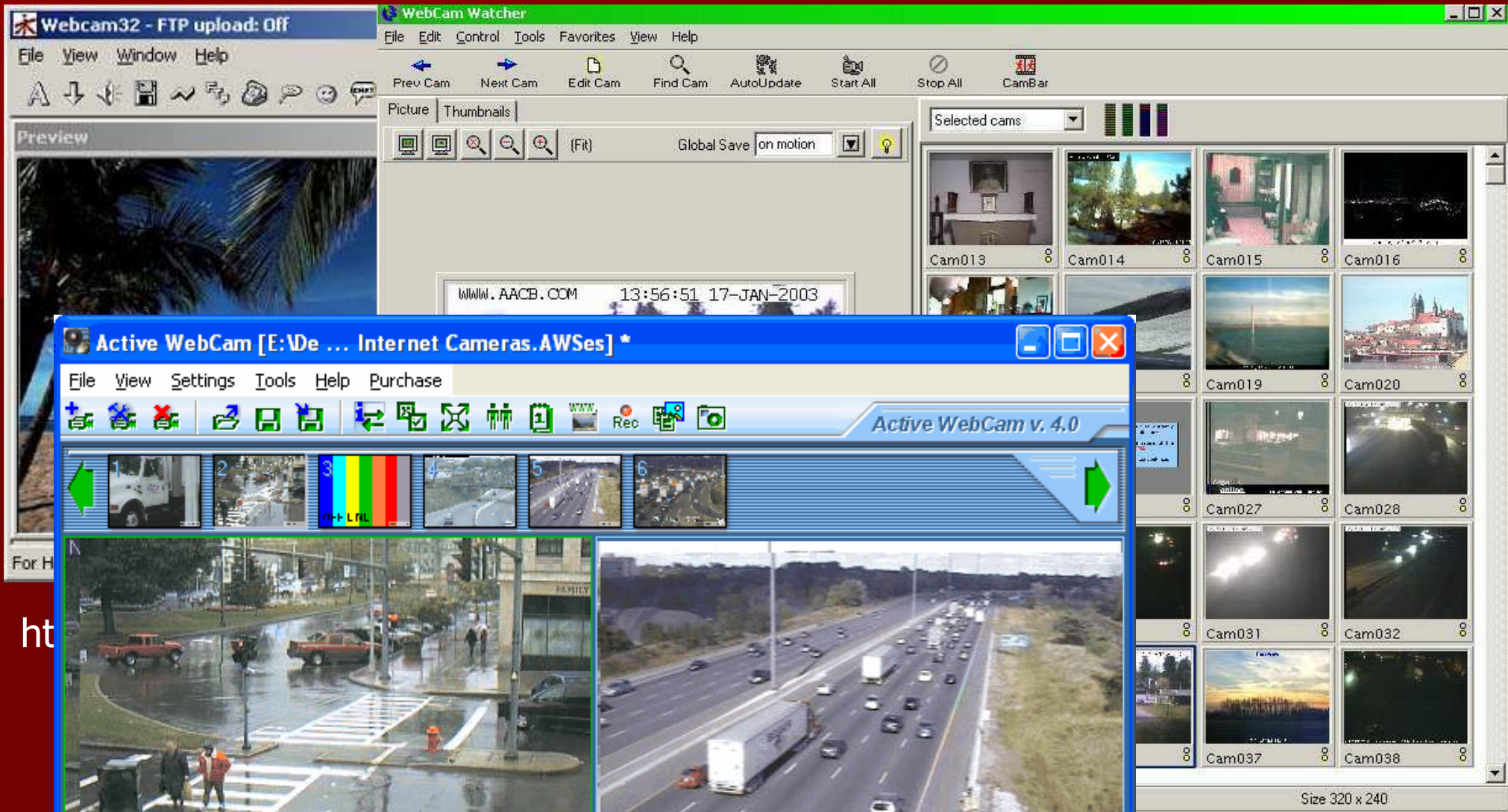
- Why not?
- Allow trusted friends to watch your..
  - Property (house, garage gardens), Family pet...
- Record intruders
- Notification of trespassers on your property
- Tell family a parcel has been left.
- ...

# Security

- How?
  - WebCAM + Software + Internet
  - Easy as 1-2-3
    - 1. Set-Up WebCAM on your PC
    - 2. Send images to Internet Website
    - 3. View images by web browser







Capture Rate: 0.2 fps	Record Rate: 0.2 fps	Frame Size: 23.2 KB	Capture Rate: 1.3 fps	Record Rate: 0.4 fps	Frame Size: 15.6 KB
Motion is OFF	HTTP Server is OFF	Remote Users: 1	Motion is OFF	HTTP Server is OFF	Remote Access is OFF

CPU usage: 16%   Errors: 0   Alarms: 0   Viewers: 1

webcam-watcher.com

<http://www.pysoft.com>





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Last Updated: Wednesday, 16 February, 2005, 22:26 GMT

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### Serial burglar caught on webcam

A house burglar was caught after a webcam on the owner's computer recorded images of him carrying out the raid.



Park kindly provided a clear image of his face during the burglary

Stills of serial raider Benjamin Park, 19, of Cambridge, were sent to an email address so even when he stole the computer, the images could be found.

Police said it was a "brilliant idea" of software engineer Duncan Grisby, who set it after a previous burglary.

Park was given an 11-month jail term by magistrates in Cambridge on Tuesday after admitting burglary.

"I was burgled three years ago and was annoyed at the time because I had thought about setting this system up then, but hadn't got around to it," said Mr Grisby.

**"The burglary was a real violation of my private space but at least he got caught"**

Duncan Grisby

"I was relieved it did what I'd intended it to when I was burgled again. It was nice to catch him in the act - but it didn't stop him from stealing my things.

So how does it work?

"The burglary was a real violation of my private space but at least he got caught.

"I just wish he'd got a longer sentence."

Last Updated: Friday, 18 February, 2005, 12:53 GMT

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### How to catch a thief - with your PC

By Joe Boyle  
BBC News

Cambridgeshire police hailed a software engineer who caught a burglar on his webcam as "absolutely brilliant". But how easy is it to turn your home PC into a surveillance system?

"As long as you're not a complete technophobe, pretty much anyone can do it" says Simon Pickstock, editor of technology magazine PC Answers.



The first step is buying a webcam.



The tiny bug-eyed devices are available in most electronic shops and sell for anywhere between £15 and £60. They come with their own software enabling them to take snaps at regular intervals and store them on your PC's hard drive.

Serial burglar caught on webcam

Many webcams also come with motion-sensitive software and the ability to select a frame of reference. For example, if you want to monitor your car, you can point the camera towards your driveway, then click and drag a box around your car.

While any movement inside your box would set the camera off, a pedestrian walking a few metres away wouldn't register.



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### Aussie man reports crime

A man in Australia tipped off police in Devon after seeing a suspected burglary on a webcam based in Exmouth.

Andrew Pritchard, 52, from Boorowa, New South Wales, saw two men run from a car to a beach-front kiosk.

After searching for the number of Devon and Cornwall police he was able to direct them to the scene

It transpired the pair were a man and an argument, not conducting a burglary Mr Pritchard for his actions.

#### Broadband

Mr Pritchard, who emigrated to Australia, Kent, was using a high-tech webcam to watch a flow of live footage rather than slow

The small town of Boorowa had only to broadband internet, which allows a week before the incident.

Mr Pritchard, an audio-visual producer, installed the Exmouth webcam because it was the only one in the world.

He tuned in during his lunchtime, while he was in Devon.

Last Updated: Thursday, 30 June, 2005, 20:31 GMT 21:31 UK

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### Nursery webcam spies on thieves

A webcam used to monitor children in a Leicestershire nursery has also caught thieves red-handed.

Little Angels in Market Harborough installed webcams into its playrooms to give parents peace of mind about their children's welfare.

However, the cameras have now also filmed two thieves stealing the nursery's morning milk delivery from outside the nursery.

Police are now using the footage to track down those involved.

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#### LINKS TO MORE LEICESTERSHIRE STORIES

Select [dropdown] Go



Webcams have been installed at several nurseries across the country

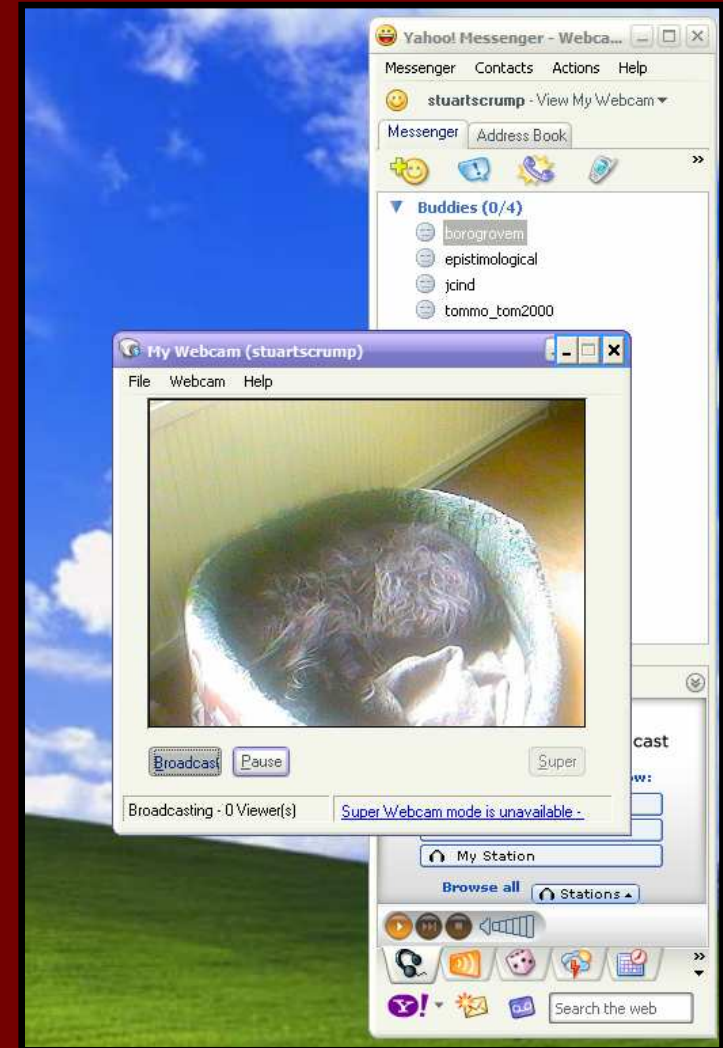
# Communication

## ■ Why?

- Talk with and see friends abroad anytime\*
  - No real cost!
- Chat whilst working through a problem
  - PC, Puzzle, Sudoku, Drawing...
- Watch nature or the sky at night
- ....

# Communication

- How?
  - Yahoo Messenger
  - MSN Messenger
  - Skype + Skype4video
  - Eyeball Chat
  - ....





Webcams

BIRDS

GARDENS

COUNTRYSIDE

RESERVES

SUPPORT THE RSPB

Birds of prey

- Osprey nest cam (close up)
- Osprey nest cam
- Highlights of 2004

Barn owls at Pulborough Brooks

Barn owls webcam offline

Our barn owl chicks have successfully fledged and the webcam is now offline. We hope you enjoyed following their progress this summer - thank you for watching.

"The camera went up last December and the whole thing has worked out quite well. It is so much better for students - and the cameras can get so close to see the colour and vibrancy."

The kestrel cam is located on the Derby City Council website under the Wild Derby webcam section.

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## SurfCam

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## Hayling Island Live Surf Cam

The Hayling Beach Surf Cam is located at the Inn on the Beach, overlooking the main swimming and windsurfing area of Hayling's popular West Beach. This service is supported by sponsorship and voluntary contributions to please visit our sponsors if you enjoy the SurfCam.

### Live View



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For  
Summer



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# Buying & Cost

- Average cost is ~£25
- Min 30fps, 640x480 colour resolution
- USB2 or Network
  - Parallel is old technology
- Low Lux is best for reduced light
- IR if watching at night
- Brand name is best
  - Logitech, 3COM, etc..
- Most software is free, don't worry about bundled software.